

Inspection of The Little Big Nursery At St. Dominic's

St. Dominics School, Bargate Street, Brewood, Stafford, Staffordshire ST19 9BA

Inspection date: 8 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and parents receive a friendly welcome as they arrive at the nursery. Children happily separate from their parents and are eager to start their day. They greet their friends and staff and follow the routines of the nursery. Children are very enthusiastic and motivated to learn and make good progress from their starting points. Children learn through an effective balance of enjoyable adult-led activities and child-initiated play. They concentrate and become deeply engaged in their chosen activity for long periods of time. Children's behaviour is excellent. From a young age, they learn to express themselves and understand how to manage their feelings and behaviours. For example, toddlers look at faces to help them recognise expressions and are encouraged to talk about their emotions and consider the feelings of others. Children learn to be friendly, calm, polite and respectful.

Children are encouraged to develop a love of books. They independently choose books and snuggle up to staff so they can look at them together. Children readily engage in circle time, where they enjoy singing familiar songs, which helps to support their early literacy skills. Children develop an awareness of other cultures and learn to respect and understand the diverse world in which they live.

All children are happy and settled. They develop secure and trusting bonds with staff and their key person. Babies and toddlers receive lots of cuddles and reassurance from the kind and caring staff. Children happily welcome encouragement and praise for their achievements, which helps to boost their self-esteem and self-confidence. Staff are professional and excellent role models.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager and the director are ambitious and exceptionally hard-working. They have a clear vision for the nursery and empower staff to take ownership for providing high-quality practice. Staff feel valued and thoroughly enjoy working at the nursery. The manager supports staff's professional development and well-being. Staff receive regular supervisions and are supported to continually develop their practice.
- Staff gather key information about children's individual needs and their existing skills and abilities before they start at the nursery. This helps staff to provide continuity in their care and helps children to settle quickly. Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff promote daily communication with parents and keep them informed on the progress their children make, both verbally and via an online application. Parents speak very highly of the nursery. They say that they like the family feel of the nursery and their children love being here.
- Staff plan enjoyable activities based on children's interests and the next steps in

their learning. Older children demonstrate good pencil control as they learn to write their name and use scissors correctly. Staff provide babies and toddlers with plenty of sensory opportunities to help them make sense of the world around them. For example, babies have lots of fun crushing a variety of dried cereals with their hands and experiment making sounds as they push toy dinosaurs into the cereals.

- Children enjoy exploring the outdoor area. They enhance their physical development as they enthusiastically navigate climbing apparatus and ride on bikes and tricycles. However, staff do not always offer as many outdoor opportunities to fully build on the development of children who prefer to play and learn outdoors.
- Children develop good independence skills. They understand the routines of the nursery and are keen to help during tidy-up time. For example, children spontaneously use a dustpan and brush to clear away any mess they have made. Staff teach children good hygiene routines, such as regular handwashing. However, on occasions, the routines for handwashing can interrupt children's learning and enjoyment, for example when they are engaged in story time.
- Children's communication and language skills are supported particularly well. Staff engage children in interesting conversations and value what they have to say. They ask children questions as they play alongside them and create opportunities for children to solve problems, predict outcomes and answer questions themselves. Staff speak calmly to babies and introduce new words as they play. Older children are confident and articulate communicators.
- The manager and the director build successful partnerships with the host school and local schools that children are due to attend, to enable smooth transitions for children's future learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager takes the lead for child protection in the nursery and fully understands the responsibilities of her role. She ensures that staff attend regular safeguarding training so their knowledge remains up to date. Staff have a good understanding of the possible signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They are confident with the nursery's policies and procedures in relation to making referrals, dealing with allegations and whistle-blowing. The manager and staff are mindful of wider safeguarding concerns, including the 'Prevent' duty. The nursery has a safe recruitment procedure in place to check the suitability of new staff and the ongoing suitability of existing staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- arrange everyday routines of the nursery, such as handwashing, so they do not disrupt children's enjoyment and engagement in learning activities, such as story time
- make the most of the outdoor learning environment to provide children who prefer to learn outside further play and learning opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2529670
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10208421
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	49
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	The Little Big Nursery Company Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2529669
Telephone number	01902 939101
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Little Big Nursery At St. Dominic's registered in 2019. It operates from several self-contained rooms within St. Dominic's Grammar School in Brewwood, Stafford. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm throughout the year. The setting employs 14 members of childcare staff, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. One member of staff holds a qualified teacher status. The manager holds a degree in early years and early years professional status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Angela Hulme

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The management team and the inspector completed a learning walk together to look at how the curriculum is planned to meet children's needs and development.
- A meeting was held with the inspector and the management team to discuss leadership and management arrangements.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and checked the evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the nursery.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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